

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 BILBAO 00039 021329Z

43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SY-05

SCCT-01 OPIC-03 TRSE-00 IO-10 USSS-00 /076 W

----- 069885

R 021225Z APR 75

FM AMCONSUL BILBAO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 466

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS UNN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, SP, BE

SUBJ: EASTER WEEK-END IN BASQUE COUNTRY

REF: BILBAO 038

1. SUMMARY: DURING THE EASTER HOLIDAYS, THE BASQUE COUNTRY WAS THE SCENE OF NUMEROUS BOMBINGS, AND ETA ASSASSINATION OF A POLICE INSPECTOR IN SAN SEBASTIAN AND THE ANNUAL BASQUE REUNION(ALBERRI EGUNA) IN GUERNICA. TWO BELGIAN MP'S WERE ARRESTED AND DEPORTED AFTER GOING TO GUERNICA FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEMONSTRATING THE CONTINUED LACK OF FREE SPEECH IN SPAIN. END SUMMARY.

2. THE EASTER WEEK-END BEGAN WITH A BANG ON MAR 27 WITH THE EXPLOSION OF FOUR BOMBS AT SEVERAL COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE HEART OF THE TRADITIONAL BASQUE TOWN OF GUERNICA, IN WHICH THE ANNUAL BASQUE NATIONALIST REUNION WAS TO BE HELD ON EASTER SUNDAY. THE EARLY MORNING BLASTS CAUSED DAMAGES ESTIMATED AT 5.5 MILLION PESETAS BUT NO DEATHS OR INJURIES.

3. THE GUERNICA BOMBINGS (AS WELL AS A NUMBER OF OTHERS AT THE SAME TIME) WERE FOLLOWED ON MARCH 29 BY THE MACHINEGUN

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PAGE 02 BILBAO 00039 021329Z

ASSASSINATION OF A SAN SEBASTIAN POLICE INSPECTOR WHO,

(ACCORDING TO A BILBAO POLICE AGENT) WORKED IN THE INVESTIGATION  
SECRET SERVICE. ETA CLAIMED CREDIT FOR THE SHOOTING IN AN  
ANNOUNCEMENT ISSUED IN BORDEAUX, FRANCE.

4. GUERNICA WAS ALSO THE SCENE OF THE ANNUAL BASQUE PILGRIMAGE ON  
"ABERRI EGUNA" (DAY OF THE FATHERLAND) ON EASTER SUNDAY. ARMED  
POLICE SET-UP CONTROL INSPECTION POINTS ON ALL ROADS LEADING  
INTO GUERNICA AND AT LEAST THREE BUSES AND A DOZEN OR SO LAND  
ROVERS CROWDED WITH POLICE WERE STATIONED INSIDE THE TOWN.  
POLICE TURNED BACK SOME CARS, SEIZED A NUMBER OF IDENTITY DOCUMENTS  
AND DETAINED SOME 40 VISITORS INCLUDING SOME WHO ARRIVED BY TRAIN.

5. THE ONLY REAL INCIDENT DURING "ABERRI EGUNA" INVOLVED TWO  
BELGIAN MP'S OF THE FLEMISH FEDERAL UNION PARTY, IDENTIFIED IN THE  
PRESS AS WALTER LUYTEN AND WILLYS KUIJPERS. UPON COMING OUT OF A  
CHURCH THEY SHOUTED THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH THE BASQUE NATIONALISTS  
AND UNFURLED A LARGE WHITE CLOTH ON WHICH WERE PAINTED BASQUE  
SEPARATIST SLOGANS AND TWO FLAGS REPRESENTING THE BASQUE COUNTRY  
AND EUROPE. THEY WERE ARRESTED BY POLICE ALONG WITH AN AMERICAN  
FREE LANCE WRITER (SEE BILBAO 038). THE MP'S WERE SUBSEQUENTLY  
DEPORTED TO FRANCE. THEY INDICATED THAT THIS DEMONSTRATION OF  
THE LACK OF FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN SPAIN WOULD ENABLE THEM TO  
PROVIDE VALID OPPPOSITION TO ANY NEW EFFORTS BY SPAIN TO JOIN  
EUROPEAN ENTITIES SUCH AS EEC AND NOTO.

6. COMMENT: DURING AND AFTER A VISIT TO GUERNICA, I TALKED TO  
SOME BASQUE NATIONALISTS WHO HAD GONE TO GUERNICA, SOME OF WHOM  
CLAIMED TO HAVE TALKED TO ETA MEMBERS ABOUT RECENT EVENTS. THEY  
ALL STATED THAT THE BOMBED ESTABLISHMENTS BELONGED TO POLICE  
INFORMERS AND THAT THE ASSASSINATED POLICEMAN HAD BEEN  
GUILTY OF TORTURING POLITICAL PRISONERS. IT IS CLEAR  
THAT THE BOMBINGS AND ASSASSINATION PROVOKED TIGHTER POLICE  
CONTROLS AND LED TO RUMORS OF POSSIBLE VIOLENT POLICE REACTION  
TO ANY POSSIBLE INCIDENT ON "ABERRI EGUNA" (GOVT HAS ANNOUNCED  
68 "ABERRI EGUNA"-CONNECTED ARRESTS). THIS CLIMATE OF  
FEAR CAUSED MANY TO STAY AWAY FROM GUERNICA. THE MANY POLICE  
IN EVIDENCE, PICTURES OF ALLEGED ETA VICTIMS PLASTERED ON  
BUILDINGS, OTHER GOVERNMENT ANTI- "ABERRI EGUNA" PAMPHLETS  
SCATTERED ABOUT THE STREETS, AND THE BRIEF INCIDENT INVOLVING  
THE BELGIAN MP'S, CONSTITUTED THE ONLY EVIDENCE THAT THIS WAS  
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PAGE 03 BILBAO 00039 021329Z

NOT JUST AN ORDINARY EASTER SUNDAY.

4. EMBASSY COMMENT: THESE EVENTS HAVE ONCE AGAIN CHARGED BASQUE  
POLITICAL CLIMATE. ETA'S OBJECTIVES IN ASSASSINATION APPEAR TO HAVE  
BEEN PROVOKE WIDESPREAD RETALIATORY ACTIONS BY GOVT, WHICH REPRESSSION  
WOULD PLAY INTO ETA HANDS, AND TO ALSO SPOIL GUERNICA COMMEMORATIONS  
OF MODERATE AND DEMOCRATIC-ORIENTED PNV BASQUE NATIONALIST PARTY.

(IN LAST YEAR'S "ABERRI EGUNA", PNV ACHIEVED PROPAGANDA SUCCESS  
BY CLANDESTINELY BRINGING BASQUE PRESIDENT-IN-EXILE LEIZAOLA FROM  
FRANCE TO GUERNICA.)

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** BOMBING, ASSASSINATION, TERRORISTS  
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**Draft Date:** 02 APR 1975  
**Decapton Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decapton Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** MorefiRH  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Review Date:** 17 APR 2003  
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**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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